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SCENE REPORT
MAAL
&
TOM RICHMAN
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CONTENTS

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-Listen to our playlists on Spotify

3 *ARTIST Q & A: WINDOW SEAT*

5 *SCENE REPORT: COLUMBIA, MO*

8 *DARK AGES:* CAN AMERICA SURVIVE?

9 *GRASSROOTS: MAAL & TOM RICHMAN*

13 *B L O G R O L L*

15 *MY FAVORITE MERCH: LAUREN TRACZEWSKI*

18 *SODA SELECTOR*

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LOCAL ARTIST Q & A

BROUGHT TO YOU BY 90.9 THE BRIDGE

BY AARON RHODES

WINDOW SEAT

Rose Brown is a singer-songwriter from Shawnee, currently attending the University of Kansas in Lawrence. She began releasing her own songs on Bandcamp in late 2019 under the name Window Seat, inspired by a childhood wish that never quite came true. She'll be graduating from KU next year, which is good news because she hopes to spend her 20s and 30s doing "fun shit" (namely making more music). Considering her knack for penning intimate, lo-fi guitar pop songs, there's a fair chance she'll be able to make good on those plans. I called Brown up via Zoom in mid-February to talk about her songwriting process, future projects, and camera roll album covers in her first ever interview.

What are you studying at KU?

I am majoring in psychology and I'm doing a minor in French.

How far along are you?

This is my second year, but I'm actually graduating next year. Which is amazing because I'm about to devote the next 15 years of my life to making music.

That's exciting. You have a pretty detailed plan for all that?

Not really. I feel like I'm just taking it all as it comes.

What makes you say 15 years then?

I don't know. I feel like I just want to spend like my 20s and early 30s doing fun shit. Oh, can I like cuss? Are you gonna put this anywhere? [Laughs]

Oh, yeah. So when did you start playing guitar, singing, and writing songs, I guess each respectively?

I started learning how to play guitar when I was a sophomore in high school, I think. And I just learned by looking up tabs. And my sister has been playing guitar since she was like nine years old, so we've always just had guitars around. And so I just picked up one of her guitars one day and taught myself, I think, a Frankie Cosmos song.

Does your sister still play a lot? What kind of stuff is she into?

She actually just put out an album. She's called Lily B Moonflower. She does bluegrass and twangy folk-country.

I guess I was curious about what has inspired your songwriting the most up until this point.

I feel like I can't really pinpoint a specific thing that inspires my songwriting. I feel like I listen to a lot of different genres and artists and take the tiny things that I like out of them and try to incorporate it into my own music.

I noticed like you follow the general indie rock stuff, but also some of the bedroom pop stuff and emo.

The genre of my music is definitely more like indie lo-fi, but I'm really inspired by space rock and post-rock and stuff like that. That's kind of like more in my guitar playing. But yeah, I think it's interesting to take inspiration from that and turn it into a really soft, sad indie song, I guess.

What do you think attracts you to writing such brief, concise songs?

I think I focus my music more on the guitar than the lyrics. But I've been really experimental in lyric writing for everything that I've made so far. But yeah, I really like the idea of having a shorter song just because I like to get to the point, I guess. And sometimes I like the idea of just leaving things in a place where you wish there was more. And then it kind of makes you want to listen to other songs, I guess.

I figure the album covers are probably just stuff from your camera roll.

[Laughs] Yeah, the picture of the milk carton, my friend Lizzie from high school took that picture when we were at lunch and I just found it in my camera roll and used it. And my favorite one, [the *9* EP cover art], my mom was just on the phone with me today and for some reason brought it up. But she was like, "You can't like have this cover art of the word 'fuck.' Like, I can't share it on Facebook if it says a bad word on it." And I'm like, "I don't know. I just thought it was funny."

Is that one a picture that you took?

Yeah, I took that one. [Laughs]

I do like the milk carton [the *Chinese Finger Trap* EP art], too. Because that represents a specific type of frustration that you only really think about when you're a kid maybe.

Yes. I was like, "This milk carton has a deeper meaning." [Laughs]

A lot of your lyrics also kind of seem very personal and intimate. I was wondering about your process with them; where you write them and how you end up putting them together.

Well, whenever I write a song, I always start with an entire song on guitar and then I kind of decide where I want to put vocals and kind of center it around that. But I kind of see lyric writing as therapeutic, I guess because I do write pretty much solely about personal experiences or things that I've seen people who are close to me experience. And I think to make that available to the public, it just opens you up. Sometimes I look back at a song and the lyrics I wrote for it and I'm like, "Damn, maybe I should not have said that." [Laughs]

Most of your production so far has been pretty lo-fi and sparse. I was wondering if it's a goal of yours to kind of expand that in the future or if you kind of just go with the flow on that front.

Yeah, I really feel like everything I make for Window Seat just makes sense and the production quality just makes sense for the kind of music that I'm making and I really don't mind doing everything myself and having things sound like shit sometimes. Because I feel like when I hear an imperfection in a song, I wouldn't change it, because that's what makes it sound different, I guess. But we currently -- me, Cole Billings, and Zach Cunningham -- are recording music right now that I wrote and it's going to be a full-length album. And it's really different because Zach is doing all of the mixing and mastering and he's doing it in Ableton and I've only ever used GarageBand. So I don't really know what he's doing, but the quality is way better for sure. And also the songs are way longer.

You're playing guitar and singing on that?

Yeah, I'm doing guitar and vocals, Zach is on drums, and Cole is playing bass.

Is it a Window Seat project?

No, I think we're gonna be called Flooding, but it's not for sure. That's the only good name I've come up with.

I meant to ask at the beginning, how did you decide on Window Seat?

Oh, yeah. When I was a kid -- I've lived in like 14 houses throughout my childhood -- I always wanted to have a little window seat in my room, but I never had one in all of those houses.

You started releasing your music just a few months before the pandemic started. Have you had the chance to play any of your songs live before?

No, I have never played live in my life. But I don't think I would ever play Window Seat songs live. The reason why I recorded it all in the first place was because I have these song ideas in my head and then the only way I can actually hear them is if I record it and put everything together. And to play it live, I feel like I would just be stripping away so much. And it's so personal that I just don't think I could. But full band stuff, I pretty much wrote that for the purpose of playing it live.

Do you have any other plans for 2021 besides the project with Cole and Zach? What are you working on right now?

Yeah, that's like the only thing that I have planned for 2021. We're probably going to release that album in the summer. But yeah, I don't really plan releasing music. I guess I kind of just write it and if I have enough songs for an EP or an album, then I'll just put it out.

Listen and download music from Window Seat at WindowSeatKS.Bandcamp.com

To discover more new music, local and beyond, listen to 90.9 The Bridge and visit their website at Bridge909.org.

PHOTO COURTESY OF COLE BILLINGS

COLUMBIA, MO SCENE REPORT

BY AARON RHODES

I've never been much of a traveler myself. From my obsessive and delusional attitude about never missing a local show I want to see, to my goal of never living anywhere permanently besides Kansas City (also delusional), I've only visited a dozen or two states and have never left America. I was hoping to change that last year until COVID threw us all a few roadblocks, so I figured a fun part of the magazine could be exploring other cities' scenes through interviews and trying to get to the heart of what makes those scenes special.

This first scene report focuses on Columbia, Missouri's punk and hardcore scene, as described by the prolific young rocker Will Tuckley. Tuckley currently plays/has played in nearly every punk band the college town has seen over the past five years including Rifle Cult, Slüsk, and Octogenarians (among others), and even Kansas City's Nitecrawlers. One of Tuckley's bands, Pure Filth, recently came to a premature end with the tragic death of their vocalist Cole Epple. In addition to talking about Columbia punk's recent history, Tuckley and I also discussed how Pure Filth came to be and Epple's evolving vocal style.

What do you think makes Columbia's scene different from Kansas City or St. Louis? What makes its personality unique?

It's weird because in Kansas City, I noticed in the past, the transitional period from like 2014 to 2016, it went from fast bands to more like mid-tempo slammy bands. I don't think that ever rubbed off on Columbia. It was like Columbia bands -- I think since it's a smaller town, people in bands in Columbia want to do something different than the other bands. So there's a lot of bands that are more inspired by metal. And you don't really see post-punk that much. But whenever there is a new band that isn't necessarily like a hardcore punk band, they take influences from those kinds of genres. I don't know. It's weird. Columbia is a weird middle spot in between the St. Louis sound and the Kansas City sound, which kind of makes it interesting.

Do people act much different at the shows there than they do in KC?

Yeah, absolutely. Columbia, this has always kind of been a thing, there's been a very real scene divide for a long time, which is younger kids coming in who want to get into it, and then there's the older punk people, or whatever you want to call them. And it's always been a little bit of a struggle, but I think there's a general understanding that we're all here for the same thing. Kansas City shows and St. Louis shows, from what I noticed, have kind of always been a little bit clique-y, too, but it's just a very strange scene divide here.
And I would guess that the younger kids might be more rowdy at the shows, but I guess that's a pretty normal thing.

It's just like the young kids come to any DIY shows being booked and there's no real general understanding that you probably shouldn't wreck the venue. But they come in and it's just like, "We're gonna wreck the entire fucking place within the first band." Like, if you see a show in Columbia, your venue will get fucked within an hour. Like, I have seen fresh walls get smashed in within 20 seconds because of these stupid kids that come from their their high school football game and then they're like, "Okay, it's a punk show, I can wreck the place." It's always been a problem in that sense. And that's why they're like, "Oh, fuck these kids kind of." It's interesting to see it happen.

It's funny, because I'm definitely part of the younger generation here, but since I've been going to shows for a decade now and booking them for a couple years, I'm kind of playing the part of trying to get the two generations to not hate each other and I feel like you're in a similar boat.

Absolutely. Yeah. For the longest time, it was just really frustrating because you want people to be on the same page and for everybody to have fun. So for so long, I was like, "Hey, these kids aren't so bad." And, "Hey, these older punks aren't that bad. We gotta not want to rip each other's throats out." And it's been an uncomfortable position for me for a couple of years now. But also, I just realized I don't need to be the fucking person that people look to, to decide what happens and I'm like, "You do your own thing." Like, it's not my job.

I've noticed that PDM has been a venue for a fairly long time, at least in DIY years. Tell me about PDM and why that's a go-to spot.

PDM was a spot that opened in 2014. It was initially supposed to be a practice space, but it was then a place that we had shows. The first PDM show was supposed to be Dirty Work, Ski Mask, and some others, but Dirty Work didn't show up, so it was an all locals bill. But it came to be 'cause the old DIY space, which was at this place called Fay Street, they got raided by the police. So it was like, "Alright, we have to move to a different spot." And the reason it's lasted so long is because it's in a district in Columbia where it's nowhere near any housing. It's in a warehouse district and the police and law enforcement know what it is, but for some reason, that still hasn't become an issue. Like, you see cops drive by at least if you have a long string of shows, like if you had 10 shows, they're going to show up three times, but they never do anything. And I don't understand how we've been able to let that keep going for so long, but it's a really good spot. It's big and everybody's accepted there and I think it's really cool.

Bands still practice there and stuff and it's quite

COWGIRL JORDY
PHOTO COURTESY OF AARON RHODES

cheap to practice there. So it's kind of just like the the only place in Colombia where you can actually do whatever the fuck you want without any consequences. So I think that's like the draw of it, especially for the kids I was talking about. They go to this place like, "Oh, we can destroy whatever we want," because it's really just a lawless place. But yeah, that's like the only DIY spot now in Columbia, because for a second there we had three, but the other two closed down.

One of those others was Gay House?

Yeah, we had some friends that lived at Gay House and my friend Jordy played drums in my old band. She would book shows there and the current guitar player in Rifle Cult, George, he also lived there. So it was a constant kind of an artist's work space and then also we would have parties and shows there. It was a really, really good environment because I think the idea of PDM is kind of intimidating to people, like this just very dark, dirty place. But then you have this alternative place, which is like, respectable in a sense and it's openly very accepting to queer youth and everything on that sort of end of things. But that was a really good spot.

The people booking shows just moved out of there?

Yeah, Jordy and George moved out and there's only one person there now that would still book shows, but it just hasn't really been a conversation topic yet.

What are a few of your favorite active Columbia bands right now?

It's Me Ross is like indie rock more or less. I don't know, that band went, from what I noticed seeing them live, from being like a garage punk band to doing borderline pop music. And in regards to the

Columbia music scene, they were the best band to see live. They always pulled a really big crowd. And I don't know if they are still a project or a full band. It might just be Ross at this point, but I could be wrong. I don't really communicate with anybody in that band that much except for the drummer.

And then **Anthony Wilkerson.** Just really old school country music. I've only seen him play a few times and he's a great musician. He used to play in this band called Cecil, which was an indie rock band that was around in like 2019. A couple of times it would be like Rifle Cult then Cecil and It's Me Ross or somewhere along those lines. Just because the amount of bands in Columbia has always been a very small circle of people. But yeah, Anthony's music is really cool.

Then **Cowgirl Jordy**. More country music -- punk rockers doing country.

Every time I see **Trivia Night** play, it's always something different, but it's this one guy named Mark who makes noise music, but he uses vinyl records in his compositions and he runs it all through pedals and tape delays and uses knives to carve into the records and it sounds fucking hellish. And every time I see him play, by the end of it, his hands are bleeding and it's just a very real and raw thing to see. That's why I like it, because it's so fucking abrasive. The amount of people you see at shows, they go to see the bands, then Trivia Night plays and they're like, "Shit," but I think that's awesome. Like, the guy's just obviously trying to agitate people. I'm like, "All right, that's real."

What are the bands and projects you're currently in?

I'm currently playing in **Rifle Cult** still. I play drums in a band called **Raven Lich**, which is a black metal band. I have my solo project **Coping Saw** and then a bunch of other noise bands that I'm in. That's pretty much it right now.

What would you say is the most rewarding music project you've worked on so far?

Honestly, the most rewarding thing was this week with **Pure Filth**, 'cause that was a band that we were really, really, really stoked on. And judging by the circumstances that went down, for a second there, we kind of felt hopeless in a sense, but we realized that we had all these recordings. So we were still able to put them all out. And seeing the amount of support that those recordings got over the span of two days was like the most rewarding thing in the world, even though it wasn't like we were the ones that are getting it because we were gonna give it to our singer's family. It was just really, really cool to see how many people were there to support it. And I hadn't really had that feeling before of like, "Oh wow, people actually fuck with my shit." So that was pretty cool.

Oh, yeah. And again, my condolences. That's a rough thing to go through.

Yeah, it stinks. It's pretty unfortunate, but shit happens. It's tough. But thank you, though.

It's okay if you're not comfortable talking about, but if you wanted to, I would want to hear about how you met Cole and what made him fun to make music with.

Yeah, pretty much I met Cole through mutual friends. I think the first time we ever talked, we were at a show at Cafe Berlin and he was wearing a Pillsbury Hardcore shirt and me and the guitar player of It's Me Ross were like, "Who's this fucking guy?" We got to talking and then hung out like one time and just hit it off immediately. He was a really, really good guy and he knew a lot about hardcore and shit, but we never saw him at shows. It was the first time I ever saw him. And so we were hanging out a lot like around October of 2019 and that's whenever we were hanging out like four times a week, and I'm pretty sure we were just sitting around one night and we were watching Bad Brains - Live At CBGB and he's like, "Oh, man, I wanna front a band. I'm like, "Oh, shit. All right."

So I talked to the bass player and the drummer and I'm like, "Yo, let's do something with this dude." And he was super, super, super fucking nervous because he hadn't done anything in regards to music before. And as time went on, he got more and more comfortable with singing and we shared the exact same influences. So it was a really good partnership, making music together. So we were practicing for a good year. We did two live videos and recorded once, but the studio recordings that we did, he didn't do vocals on. So we have them, but it's all instrumentals. But we still had this clip of this live tape we did, which is why whenever you listen to the new Pure Filth album, it's like whenever you can hear his vocals drown out and you can hear clanks and stuff, it's because he was rolling around on the floor and shit. Because we didn't assume we were gonna put that out ever, it was more for a live video.

Yeah, that band was honestly one of the most fun bands that I'd ever played in. And because I never really got into playing guitar ever. It was just kind of one of those things I was afraid of, like, "Oh, that's the shit that the people hear the most. I'm not that great." But being in that made me feel way more comfortable with myself and experimenting musically.

How would you describe Cole's vocal style?

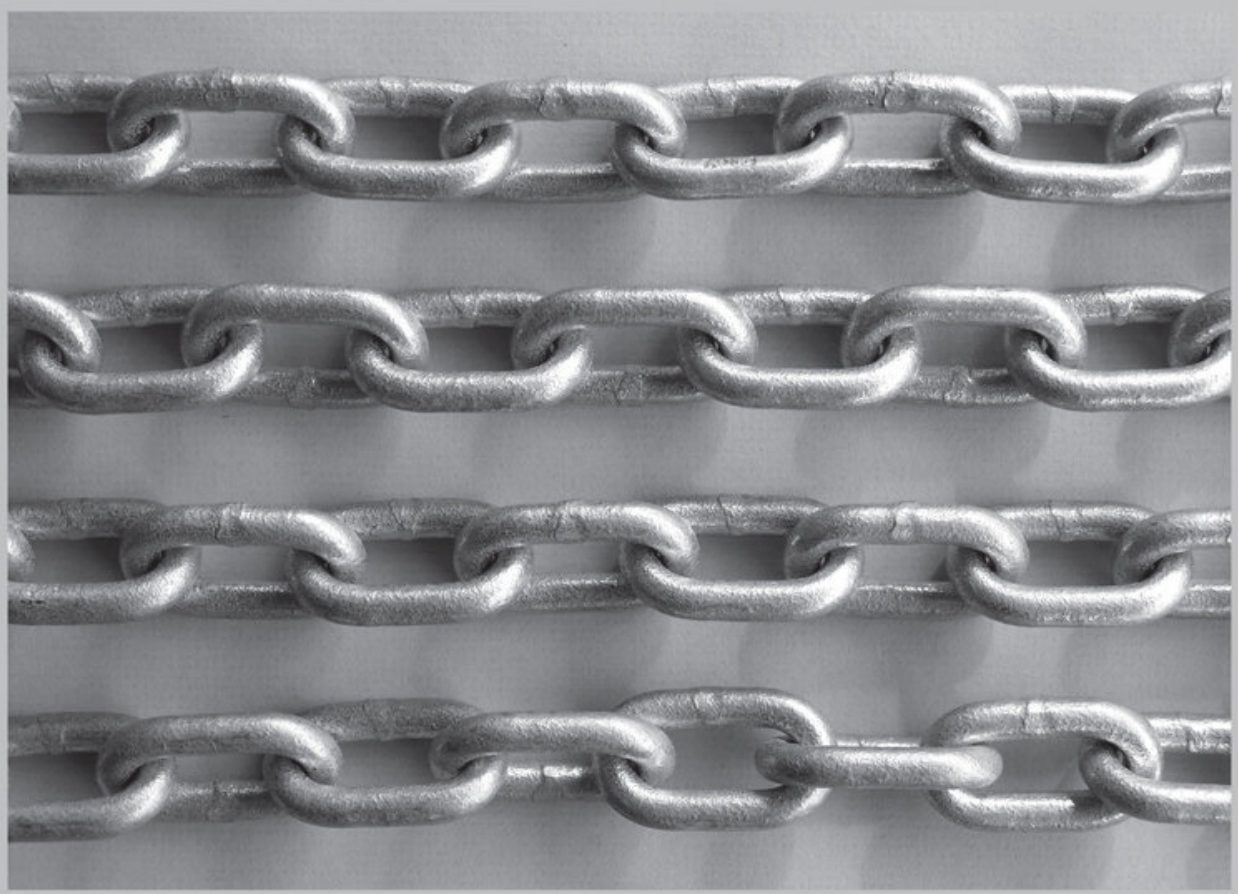
Confused [laughs]. I know that he fucked with Void and he wanted to do Void vocals. But he also was really into bands like The Flex and Hoax and shit. And so it was like he was trying to combine the two. And I think by the end, you listen to the recording we put out, that was like really early in his vocal transformation I'd say, because whenever you listen to it, it's borderline Minor Threat. Like, super direct, more shouty than screamy, but in the later live videos, you listen to it and I mean, he just sounds like the fucking Void singer more or less.

So I mean, his style was dramatically changing. Like almost every week it was something different, which was cool because we never really knew what the hell we were gonna sound like in the end. But yeah, it was fun to see it happen because you can tell more and more when he was getting more comfortable being a frontperson and the nervousness was disappearing. And by the time like, fucking three weeks ago, we were sounding really good, and this was all for in preparation of a show in June. So it's crazy to think what it could have been. But I'm also really happy with what it was.

PURE FILTH,
PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSE EPPLE

Pure Filth's album, The World is Dying, is available now on Bandcamp.

DARK AGES



CAN AMERICA SURVIVE?

DARK AGES: CAN AMERICA SURVIVE?

BY AARON RHODES

I can't explain to you how perfect it feels to be writing about what is -- and will likely remain -- my favorite local album of all time, ten years after its release, in the first print issue of this magazine. A running joke I have with myself is that I don't believe in fate or karma or anything like that (simply too much bad shit happens to good people for this to feel true), except they do exist in my life. Far too many funny coincidences and full-circle moments happen to me, and this seems to be the latest of them.

My interest in music slowly took hold when I was in sixth grade. I discovered pop-punk bit by bit through video games and movies, eventually finding music videos on YouTube, and joining message boards dedicated to different bands. Sum 41 and Blink-182 were instant favorites, plus Green Day was inescapable post-*American Idiot*. The intensity and catchiness of the music and the members' crude sense of humor made perfect sense to me. On the last day of school that year, after digging backwards a bit and discovering the melodic punk of the nineties, my first concert was The Offspring at City Market.

Seeing my favorite bands every few months through middle school made the experience tolerable enough. I loved showing up to school the next day in my new band tee and bragging to my classmates after they asked about the X's on my hands. It's exciting to have something of your own.

During these years, I'd always stumble across mentions of hardcore punk, but when I'd try to check out a song, I was always put off by the lack of melody and my inability to decipher the lyrics. I loved the original seventies bands like The Clash, Sex Pistols, and Ramones, the EpiFat melodic punk of the nineties (Rancid, NOFX, etc.), and the glossy pop-punk of the aughts, but essentially, the eighties didn't exist to me.

Though the movie has been derided for its lack of narrative focus and fairly narrow view of the movement, my first viewing of Paul Rachman's 2006 documentary *American Hardcore* made everything click for me. I saw clips of live gig chaos unlike anything I had ever seen, principled critiques of government, media, religion, and lifestyle, and teenagers starting their own bands, booking their own shows, making their own flyers, and traveling the country with their friends. Quickly, my new favorite bands became Black Flag, Bad Brains, and Minor Threat. It pained me that I would never get to witness such bands live, but there were so many albums to dig through that I was content for the time being.

Then, one evening, a friend's older brother who had been made aware of my interest in hardcore invited me to my first DIY show. We arrived at what was the final show at the infamous Studded Bird, a small, nondescript building at the edge of the Crossroads District off Highway 71. Though I enjoyed being in a room with more leather jackets and crazy haircuts than I had ever seen in one place, I was stuck at the back of the room and couldn't see or hear much of the action before my parents texted me and demanded that my friend drive me home before the show was over.

When the next show rolled around, my parents had decided that they didn't want a slightly older teenager driving their teenage son to the city to see a show at a semi-secret, Ask A Punk location. So (sorry, Mom and Dad), I was dropped off at a trusted friend's home for a fake sleepover that I would be whisked away from on my trek to the Asshole Castle (a house near the corner of 41st and Troost).

The first couple bands we watched were fun enough; more in the noise rock and skramz vein, one of which smashed their instruments at the end of their set. The basement was crowded as I returned downstairs before Dark Ages began, so the only room I could find was a cramped spot just behind the drums. Never having heard of the band before, they proceeded to blow my 14 year-old mind. The band played some of the meanest, tightest eighties-style hardcore I'd ever heard as bodies flew across the floor; some fans even crowdsurfed their way to the front to sing along. It was the most exciting experience of my young life -- I think if you had looked at me during that set, my eyes probably looked like they were about to pop out of my head. Hardcore punk was alive in my hometown. My friend sent me the MP3 files of *Can America Survive?* that week and I haven't looked back since.

A lot of bands and records that were coming out of Kansas City at the time were just as fast as Dark Ages. There were also bands that sounded a lot angrier than Dark Ages, at least in a traditional punk rock "fuck you, fuck off" type of way. What made Dark Ages special was the band's brooding energy, precisie and blistering playing style, and monolithic mystique present on every song.

Jordan Carr's urgent shouts and maniacal laughs are unmistakable and his songwriting style is simultaneously bold and cryptic (in an artful way, rather than a too-cool-for-school, impossible to decipher way). Over the course of the album (as best as I can interpret), Carr takes on the subjects of consumerism, corporate power, sexism, racism, conformity as a whole, and the rigged, crumbling state of our country. In a twisted kind of way, *Can America Survive?* has aged like fine wine over the last decade. While much of white America was participating in political avoidance through the Obama years, Carr was writing doomsayer anthems for those who knew the other shoe was going to drop sooner or later.

The music paired with this incisive prose was just as powerful. Guitarist Justin Betterton's style was complex, frantic, and anxiety-ridden without losing an inch of the frustration the songs were built upon. Neal Dyrkacz' bass playing was equal parts ominous and effortlessly cool, often kicking in a second or two before the guitar and drums, sweeping the listener off their feet. It's been said that a band is only as good as its drummer, so lucky for Dark Ages, Jason Shrout can drum like crazy. And when you're as talented as Shrout is, it's easy to over-play and steal attention away from other parts of the songs, but his motor-like rhythm and short, engaging fills never once cross that line.

"It was the most exciting experience of my young life -- I think if you had looked at me during that set, my eyes probably looked like they were about to pop out of my head."

To top it all off, after nine exceptional originals, the band closes the LP with a cover of Kansas City hardcore punk band Choke's "Easier To Die," released exactly 30 years previous. The song is a bleak five-minute march into the unknown and the logical conclusion to an album that so acutely outlines the ways in which America oppresses its citizens (the album cover's chains, perhaps) and offers, to most, a monotonous existence (the cover's gray backdrop).

While I could not offer you such a detailed analysis of this album those first several years I listened to it, I loved it just the same. Needless to say, returning to school each week after participating in such a visceral and supremely cool underground music scene, I felt a sense of superiority to my classmates (which admittedly took a second to unlearn), but also one of belonging -- a feeling that many kids who don't fit in at more traditional extracurriculars often miss out on. If walking around my high school ever made me feel alone (it often did by my junior and senior years, after many friends had transferred or dropped out), I knew that I could at least find a quiet place to sit with my iPod and immerse myself back into a world absent of teachers, parents, cops, bosses, jocks, and evangelists.

Dark Ages played its final show in 2015, just a few months after I graduated high school, and two years before I would move into the same house where they first blew my mind. Though they're no longer together, the band has continued to embody their DIY spirit in other ways. Carr currently owns and operates Oddities Prints, a print shop responsible for t-shirts, record inserts, and other art prints (and occasionally host to basement shows). Betterton hosted KCDIY Radio up until 2020, blasting punk and hardcore on 90.1FM KKFI Kansas City community radio airwaves. He still posts flyers and other pieces from his personal archive online. Shrout and Dyrkacz are still playing music, Shrout in metalcore band 34 and Dyrkacz in the proto-metal Inner Altar and oi!/glam project Bootkrieg.

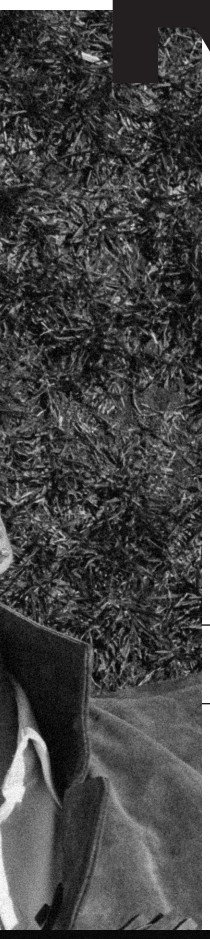
It's rare that a group of four individuals has such a positive lasting impact on a creative scene. I only hope that I can accomplish a fraction of what they have and, with any luck, inspire the generation that follows me to do the same.

Do whatever it takes to track down your own copy of *Can America Survive?* and thank me later.

G R A S S

HOW MAAL & TOM RICHMAN MADE THEIR REFRESHING, ORGANIC R&B RECORD

R O O T S



BY AARON RHODES
PHOTOS COURTESY OF JELANI RICE

Picture this: It's a gorgeous 60-something degree day in early March as winter is melting into spring. Kansas Citians are basking in the post-freeze warmth. Birds are chirping, COVID is trending downward, and I am...still on a Zoom call.

If the situation was any different, we all would have met up in person, but Tom Richman, producer and half of Maal & Tom Richman (duh), has just moved to New York -- a lifelong dream of his. Richman calls in from a temporary spot he's staying at before he settles in Queens. Maal calls from Lawrence, where he has recently returned after several years in Los Angeles. I ask if the return home is temporary due to the pandemic and I get a quick and typically quippy reply: "Isn't life just temporary?" he asks with a wry smile.

Ah, the sweet release of death. Sounds kind of inviting after the last year we've all had, right? Obviously, life-affirming moments are a little hard to come by right now, but I can assure you that Maal and Richman's new album, *Grass*, holds several.

Part of what makes *Grass* so rewarding is its unique mix of old and new. Pop music today -- while oftentimes still exceptional -- is rife with lyrics about depression and anxiety and the drugs taken to cope with those ailments. The songs are full of hazy synths, clattering drums, and other cold, synthetic sounds, even when the lyrics end up more upbeat. On *Grass*, Maal, Richman, and their team made an album just as catchy as anything on the charts, cribbed some of those songs' themes and tropes, and reconstructed them with organic instrumentation and a free-spirited delivery.

The seeds of the album were planted while Maal and Richman were on tour performing Maal's album with longtime friend and collaborator P. Morris, *Good Morning, I Love You*, back in 2016. Long used to performing in more traditional hip-hop or DJ arrangements (their old outfit, Team Bear Club, threw some legendary parties that you can study up on elsewhere), the crew was enjoying the new live band setup and wanted to use it to craft the *GMILY* follow-up. That Maal & Morris sequel is still in the works, but much of the lineup on that album was the same as on *Grass*, recorded from fall 2019 to spring 2020 in Highland Park, Los Angeles.

Its opening track, "Radio," begins with lap steel guitar picking courtesy of Lucas Gorham and a few fluttering notes from in-demand saxophonist Sam Gendel. Simultaneously, you can hear the pastoral sounds of Maal and Richman's Kansas home and the palm trees and scenic hills of their adopted California.

The song makes for a pensive and heartfelt overture; Maal's raps make note of humanity's shared struggles before paying tribute to a couple of his escapes of choice. ("On the street they don't care about us / Only made in America / On the news it's hysteria / I found love in my stereo.") The album was mostly wrapped up by the time that coronavirus lockdowns reached America, so while the societal ills being acknowledged here come from general Trump-era woes and those that long predate the administration, the lyrics feel even more emotional given how 2020 played out. *Grass* was ready to go by last summer, but Maal and Richman agreed that amid landmark racial justice protests, it simply wasn't the right time to release it and opted to wait until March 2021.

Paired with the thoughtful and minimal accompaniment of Richman and the band, Maal's voice on "Radio" and beyond is arrestingly gentle, able to inspire a hopeful calm in any listener. He claims to have "the world's chillest voice" in a voiceover clip on his YouTube channel and I would not argue with this at all. He also has some ASMR videos, if that's your thing.

Then there's "Pot Smoke." The song is an elegant, piano-led R&B track that exudes the playful hippie vibe that's a common thread through much of the album. Lots of modern weed-centric music simply utilizes blunt smoking as another way to signal coolness to the listener, but the combination of vintage instrumentation and Maal's post-trap delivery is distinct as they come. (It's easy to picture this number performed at what would be an extremely fun Tiny Desk Concert.)

Richman filled me in on an important part of the creative process he shares with Maal and Morris. "I feel like as a producer, I've always been trying to figure out, 'How can I do this thing in a way that no one else has ever done? How can I make drum and bass music with trap drums? How can I make a country song with drum and bass drums? How can I use these elements in a way that no one else ever used [them]?'"

It's with this experimental outlook in mind -- almost like a random genre combo generator -- and their decade-plus of experience that Maal, Richman, and their friends are able to seamlessly assemble vintage R&B instrumentals with modern hip-hop lyrics on "Pot Smoke," or psych pop imagery and Latin rhythm on "1969," (free love, am I right?) and so on. Even looking back to *GMILY*, the song "Muddy Waters" is essentially a blues song reinterpreted through modern hip-hop production. Whatever the combination, the end product is most often a sort of suave, savvy stoner music with a life of its own -- 100% additive-free smoking tunes for the fashion magazine crowd (with a sense of humor).

The average Music Enjoyer should have no problem Getting Down to the Far Out Tunes on *Grass*, but something that should be addressed for

the sake of the insufferable type of music nerds that often read music magazines (like myself) is Maal's penchant for pastiche. (Jokes aside, it's an interesting and important element of his music.) On "Radio," there's the line, "On the radio, DJ don't play 'em like they did before." On "Pot Smoke," "This another song for you to dance to" and a refrain of "whole club full of haters." These aren't direct quotes from other songs, or even interpolations -- Maal has simply mastered the strange art of writing lyrics and vocal melodies that you can swear you've heard before, despite that not being the case. This occurs in the production sometimes, too: "1969" sounds like it could be a Doors or Beatles b-side that you just can't put your finger on.

Occasionally, Maal pushes things even further, making direct references to other songs. This occurs on "The Code" ("Where were you when we were getting high?") and throughout "Valproate," a loving tribute to Nirvana's "Lithium." To make better sense of this habit, you may want to backtrack and listen to "Type Beat" from Maal and Richman's previous album, *Butane*. "Type Beat" is a party rap song built almost exclusively from back-to-back-to-back references to other rappers' hit songs and production styles. Once you've heard this, it should be clear that Maal's meta tendencies come from a place of appreciation and fascination with hip-hop and pop culture. Lil B, Playboi Carti, Father, Yung Jake, and other beloved artists have made use of abstracted hip-hop trends in their work, but of course, none exactly like Maal.

If any listeners are still having a tough time with the concept, Maal offers a simple comparison: "The Beatles, bro! The first three albums they put out, half of the songs were covers. So it's like, people love the fucking covers and it's worked since the dawn of fucking time. ["Valproate"] is basically a cover." He continues, "And that's what hip-hop is to me. The sample is part of hip-hop history. It connects the mind to something similar and it draws the reference -- you get the taste of an artist. I can sample some things that mean something to me and draw inspiration and nostalgia for me," Maal says before offering a final comparison to Frank Ocean's prominent sampling of Coldplay and MGMT tracks on Nostalgia, Ultra.

Grass comes to a close with a trio of tranquil and fulfilling tracks. There's the mostly instrumental "Theme Of Grass" which features sounds from nature over ambient guitars and synths, "Wild Dogs," a Richman favorite that he says reflects his friendship with Maal (a howling good time), and "Go Higher," a song that's genuinely inspirational while simultaneously making another clever weed reference.

And that's it. Nine songs, here and gone in 20 minutes, ready to be replayed. Anthems for summertime car rides, reunions with dear pals, shared joints. New, old, a little of both. Loud and soft with room to breathe in-between. Clutterless. Both meta and intimately personal. If nature really is healing, *Grass* is the soundtrack to that.

Grass is available now on Bandcamp and all streaming platforms.

BLOGROLL

BY AARON RHODES

Try as I might, I can't cover Kansas City's music scene all by myself. In Blogroll, I'll be conducting a monthly roundup of writing, audio, and video content by or about Kansas Citians involved in the arts. Going forward, this column will just be featuring content from the previous month, but this first one is going to be longer than most just because there's been a lot of great material in the last few months.

PHOTOS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: LOVE DOJO 72 WITH DJ BABIFACE, YADDA YADDA LIVE IN-STUDIO WITH NO$KOPE, RALPH LAUREN: ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL LIVE WITH JANELLE MONÅE.

VIDEO CONTENT

-Yadda Yadda Live In-Studio: No$kope
KC-via-Chicago rapper No$kope first teamed up with drummer Eddie Reed for a show I booked at Farewell Transmission back in March 2019. The pair recently reunited for a live session performance hosted by the Yadda Yadda Podcast at Nightjar -- a studio and performance space two doors down from Farewell. No$kope's aggressive style makes this bare bones punk rock collab a no-brainer.

-Coop Sessions: Ebony Tusks at Charlotte Street
Local experimental hip-hop trio Ebony Tusks is infamous for its live performances. Few music acts in America are capable of moving from ornate ambient composition to jarring noise-rap chaos with such grace. That's why an IRL release show for their long-awaited LP, *Heal_Thyself*, was missed so sorely. Thankfully, the Coop Sessions team gave us the next best thing with a pro-grade live session video filmed at the Charlotte Street Foundation's Black Box Theater.

-Summer Of Sound: A'Sean and Faintheart
The visual presentation of Summer Of Sound -- a new live session series filmed at The Rino -- isn't all too fancy, but a 25-minute HD performance from longtime Shuttlecock favorite A'Sean is a document I'm thankful for.

-Ralph Lauren: All or Nothing at All - Live with Janelle Monáe
A film noir-inspired virtual fashion show featuring a Janelle Monáe performance? Sure, why not. Monáe and her band pull out a Sinatra cover and a few tunes from various eras of her career. They look sharp and sound even better.

-Big Music Needs to Be Broken Up to Save the Industry - Ron Knox, Wired
In case you weren't aware, the music industry is pretty fucked up. Ron Knox is a Kansas City based journalist and senior researcher at the Institute for Self-Reliance. In his Wired debut, he writes in depth on the corporate consolidation and monopoly power that has become increasingly rampant in the biz over the last two decades. Essentially, three mega-labels, a few streaming platforms, one radio company, and one event/ticketing company make an alarmingly high amount of the industry's profits and are able to box out independent competitors with ease. And at the end of the day, when a corporate boardroom or a streaming algorithm is in charge of what gets plays, the culture suffers.

-Silicone Times - Vol. 1, Issue 3
Ian Teeple (best known for rocking in Warm Bodies, The Natural Man Band, and The Fog) is keeping busier than most during this pandemic. In addition to releasing the debut LP of their latest project, Silicone Prairie, which is sure to make my year-end list, Teeple has started their own snail mail newsletter. The Silicone Times is sent out to subscribers once a month and features interviews, guest contributions, and other ramblings from Teeple. The March issue included a great interview with Kohei Urakami, a member of D.C. punk band Rashōmon who recently moved to Japan and started a new band called Kagami. Email Silicone-Prairie93@gmail.com or message @een_usa on Instagram to get the newsletter.

-Alice Cooper on his latest, *Detroit Stories*, and honoring the past without nostalgia - Nick Spacek, The Pitch
Legendary rockstar Alice Cooper hopped on the phone with Lawrence's Nick Spacek back in February. The two talked about horror movies (an area of expertise for Spacek, who also hosts From & Inspired By, a podcast about film soundtracks) and Cooper's recent album, but what truly made this piece a gem are the stories Cooper dishes about the heyday of rock-n-roll and Motown that he got to witness in Detroit in the sixties and seventies. To be in those rooms!

-Robert Moore Reclaims His Freeform Radio Roots at 90.9 The Bridge - Brian McTavish, Flatland/KC Studio
One casualty of 96.5 The Buzz's transition into Alt 96.5 KC (*puking emoji*) was the beloved Sonic Spectrum. The station's corporate owners, Entercom, made national cutbacks this past September, leaving The Church Of Lazlo as the sole program still broadcast from Kansas City. Luckily, Robert Moore's Sonic Spectrum -- known for championing new wave, post-punk, and other sounds that often don't find a home on the radio -- has since landed at 90.9 The Bridge. McTavish's article offers a history of the program from its 2002 inception at KCUR, to its commercial years at the Buzz, and back to its public radio beginnings at the Bridge. Kansas City's most calming radio voice lives to gab another day.

-Black-owned brands are overdue for their spotlight - J.M. Banks, The Pitch
My personal style is basically a punk/hardcore fan's uniform: denim jacket, band tee, black jeans, sneakers. I have little to no knowledge in regards to the world of fashion, but perhaps what qualifies as a passing interest. This recent piece by J.M.

RADIO SHOWS/PODCASTS

-Beyond The Booth, Episode 13: Ebony Tusks
When you're talking to a group with as much combined talent and experience as Ebony Tusks, there isn't often enough time to talk about everything you hope to. I enjoyed speaking with them for my Pitch article last year, but Beyond The Booth host Cameron Capers got to touch on subjects I didn't get to, like their activist efforts, early personal influences, and some elements of their writing process.

-The #AssJamz Podcast, Episode 121: Shrimp Tales
Cam and Jon have been deejaying together as #AssJamz for almost a decade now and have hosted parties with the likes of the Ying Yang Twins and Lil Yachty. In addition to their on-stage chemistry, the pair can talk for hours on any given subject (though it's usually music). The most recent episode of their podcast features theories on how that shrimp tail got into the cereal (and some new music discussion).

-A People's History Of Kansas City: Kansas City's Barbecue King
KCUR producer (and member of the punk band Nature Boys) Suzanne Hogan recently began the second season of her podcast, A People's History Of Kansas City, which highlights stories important to local culture. A recent episode focused on local barbecue pioneer Henry Perry and his long overlooked influence.

-Station To Station, Episode 3: Khrystal
In addition to the main podcast hosted by Center Cut Records founder Patrick Sprehe, the Center Cuts feed is also home to Station To Station, hosted by local musician and Bridge content manager Michelle Bacon. On the most recent episode of Station To Station, Bacon talked with KCK musician/actress/comedian/writer Khrystal about her beginnings in acting, the local music ecosystem, and her goal of empowering the youth in her writing.

-The Z Show, Episode 149
Skylar Rochelle's show on the Bridge features two hours of new indie music and a handful of throwbacks every week plus the occasional artist interview. One of her March shows included a brief interview with TheBabeGabe of Blackstarkids about her new clothing brand, BSK's two live shows, and her acting ambitions.

-Well Rounded Podcast, Episode 1: DJ Alphabeta
Well Cultured (a.k.a. Cult) has been covering hip-hop culture in Topeka, Kansas since 2013. The first episode of their new podcast featured DJ Alphabeta, a DJ and producer from Topeka who has thrown several block parties, constructed a DIY venue in his living room, and dropped three beat tapes over the past few years. Host Lino Gonzalez talked with Alphabeta about his interest in '90s Memphis hip-hop, Topeka's scene, and some shows he's booked.

-Love Dojo 72, Episode 3
Love Dojo 72 is a freeform online radio show hosted by DJ Babiface (Kansas City's Charmaine Ejelonu). Ejelonu curates an eclectic mix of music ranging from jazz, hip-hop, and reggae to more experimental, ambient pieces with brief bits of cryptic poetry and vocalizations used as interludes. It's kind of a vibe.

For links to all of this material, find this Blogroll post on the Shuttlecock website.

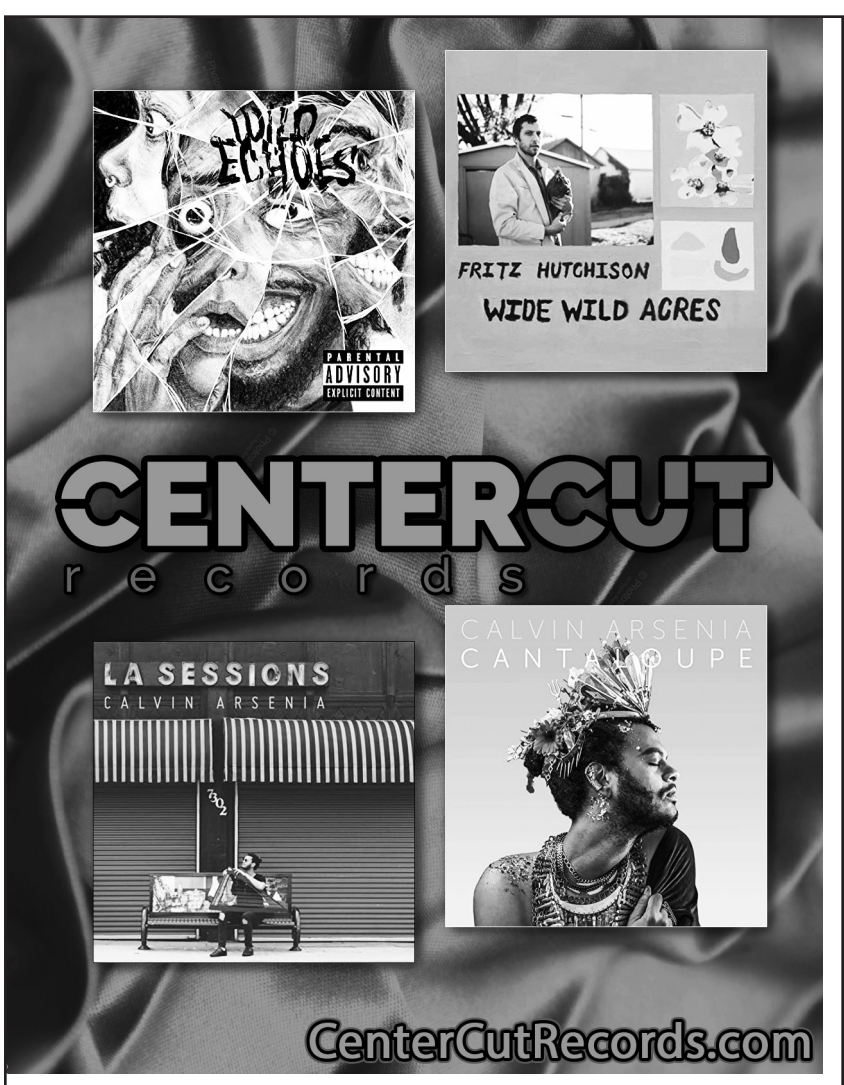
READING MATERIAL

Banks (writer and host of the Urban Alchemy podcast) outlines the constant innovations that Black designers are responsible for and briefly profiles several brands and shops based in Kansas City.

-An Ode to D'Angelo - DeAsia Paige, R&B Paiges
I haven't yet bothered putting together a list of my favorite concerts I've ever attended (a daunting task), but I'm confident that D'Angelo's 2015 stop at the Midland would rank in my top 10. DeAsia Paige, a former University of Kansas student now based in East St. Louis, wrote in her R&B Paiges email newsletter about her personal journey with the music of D'Angelo and his recent Verzuz livestream show.

-A Surfeit of Lampreys - Liz Cook, Haterade
I am personally too picky of an eater to ever engage in food criticism. Regardless of this childish tendency of mine, I love reading Liz Cook's thoughtful and occasionally absurd dispatches in the food and drink section of the Pitch and her own Haterade email newsletter. The most recent Haterade update is about Cook's slow return to dining out as the pandemic winds down and the unfortunate consequences of dining in private for a year.

-How "L'Amour Toujours" Became Hyperpop Canon - Allison Harris, Ringtone Mag
Kansas City music journalist Allison Harris penned a deep dive on the cheesy and endlessly catchy Eurodance song that plays as the credits roll in "Uncut Gems." You can also find their tribute to the late Sophie in the Pitch/UNews.



MY FAVORITE MERCH

1

BY AARON RHODES

LAUREN TRACZEWSKI

It's good to go with your gut sometimes. So when I decided I wanted to have a recurring page about band merch, the first person I reached out to was my friend Lauren. Lauren grew up going to hardcore shows in the Kansas City metro and then in Chicago during her time there as a student. As we discussed during our Zoom call, Lauren always manages to get ahead of trends by seeking out items and niches nobody else is thinking about yet. (I'm pretty sure she was the first person I saw rocking Crocs a few years back before they became trendy again recently.) I'm always excited to check out the playlists she makes and I open every newsletter she sends with a quickness -- her holiday shopping guide this past winter was more than helpful. Read below about a few of her favorite items from her collection.

Revelation Records did that 25 year anniversary tour or something. They came to Chicago and they turned it into a whole weekend. So there was a record swap, there were a bunch of people selling their stuff, and some guy had a box of t-shirts and I'm looking through the t-shirts and there's this one [image 1].

It's on Screen Stars. I found it in this box and I was like, "Oh my God, I have to have this. It's so cool, I've never seen one like it, Killing Time is one of my favorite bands, holy shit." And also the shirts are like $5-10 dollars or whatever. So I hold it up like, "How much for this one?" and he goes, "I'm gonna have to charge you 30 for that one." And I was just like, "Yep. Bye." So that thrill of just like finding this really cool shirt. It is a bootleg I think. I've never seen one like it again.

Yeah, no, I feel like that's not like a normal colorway that you'd see of it maybe.

Yeah, it's weird. There's this weird overlap here. It's like, the red goes over the black line, you can see. I'm pretty sure it's a bootleg. This dude didn't know where he got it from. He's like a dad from the suburbs in Chicago. Chicago is weird like that. I don't think I ever saw him again. But, you know, it's like a cool thing for a decent price. And then after that, I was just like, totally hooked. I was like, dude, that's so cool. I can get something that was like actually a piece of what was happening when these bands were at their prime and in their peak, you know, and like, something that I can have as part of the era and also shows like, hey, I'm into this stuff. And then somebody can come up to you and be like, "Oh my gosh, I like that, too." And then you can make a connection. That, in a very naive and pure way, was kind of what I thought was dope about it.

So yeah, this is one of my first gets ever. I don't think I will ever part with it. I love it. It still fits great. Super cool. I saw Breakdown once and I wore the shirt, and Rich, who played in Killing Time and Breakdown, he just passed away, came up to me and was like, "Where did you get that shirt? I've never seen that before. We didn't make those," and thought it was so cool. And that's such a nice thing, that you can just have this connection based on a piece of cloth that you're wearing.

Yeah, I think I think I remember you posting that. That was a really sweet story.

It was nice. It made me feel cool and seen and understood. And then I could get the scoop on what the shirt was about because I had always been wondering. People would ask me and I wouldn't know what to say. He was like, so thrilled. You know, all those older guys are thrilled that people still like their band. So that was great. That was like what started me on my journey of old stuff, right. And then I will move into something that I don't know that I've even shown a lot of people only because it's a sports bra. Which is kind of weird, but it's a Rampage sports bra [image 2].

Sick.

2

It says "Physical Therapy" on it. It's got a little skull guy lifting weights. So this one I actually bought at a show. This is official Rampage merch. I think there are two in the whole world. I think the other person who has one is Morgado from The Wrong Side. I think his girlfriend has one. And we're the only two people. I don't know her. I saw him post about it once, that his girlfriend had copped one.

I don't know him personally or anything like that. But I think that's the lore, is that there's two. So I was at Chaos In Tejas -- R.I.P., best fest that's ever existed, ever. I only got to go one time. Rampage played. I just happened to walk past the merch table and there it was on the table, and I was like, "These are for sale?" And the chick selling it was like, "Yeah," and I was like, "Okay, I'll have one," and it was $10 and it's cool. And I wear it all the time. And I think I picked that one because it's rare, which I like. Who doesn't like that? Rare, unattainable, that's like obviously a huge draw. Anybody who says that they don't care about that is lying, because it feels dope to just have something special.

And I bought it at like probably my peak era of show-going, you know, where I was flying all over the place to go to gigs. I had so many friends at every show I went to. I mean, like all of Chicago went down to the fest that year. So cool. Free Spirit played, Raw Nerve played, the Omegas from Canada played, Youth Of Today, The Rival Mob, all on the same show. That was 2011, 2012, something like that. Really fun time, really good memory. I think about it every time I see this item and I wear it to the gym. So like, everybody listens to Rampage at the gym, so I wear my Rampage sports bra to the gym. So you know, it's fun to actually use it. I don't like to put my stuff away in a place, like in a little glass box. You know, I want to get my wear out of it.

3

When everybody's looking right, you have to look left. So I've been collecting Neil Young bootleg CDs, specifically from Japan, but not exclusively from Japan [image 3]. And one of the first ones I got was this Neil Young & Crazy Horse 2001 Rock Odyssey CD. You can see there's a ticket stub in here, completely unrelated to the actual recording of what's going on here. So what I think happened -- I bought this in Chicago at an antique store. It would just happen to be on a table. I was like okay, cool. The setlist is really good. It's a two disc thing. Only one disc in here, the other one's in my car.

So this recording is in Ireland or something from 2001. The actual ticket stub is at the United Center in Chicago from 2003. So I think this was probably sold in the parking lot at that show and whoever bought it put the ticket stub of the show they're attending in the case.

It's kinda like when you buy an old book or something, and it has a cool item in one of the pages.

Yeah, that's what it felt like to me. That's like a cool, nerdy fan thing to do and I think that's pretty cute. So I think that's really special. Neil is also famously anti-bootleg, if you've ever seen that video of him on the internet where he goes in that record store, and he confronts the record store clerk, not even the owner, about these bootleg LPs that they're selling, and he's like, "Who authorized these?" So, love you, Neil, but I'm collecting the bootleg CDs.

Subscribe to Lauren's newsletter at Crumbworld.Substack.com and read an extended version of our conversation (with color photos) on ShuttlecockMusic.com.

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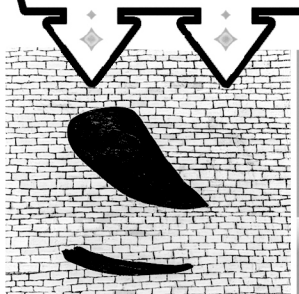
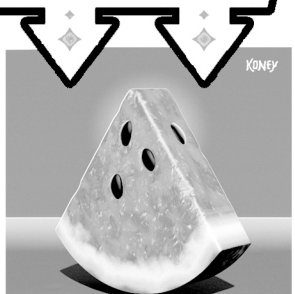


EBONY TUSKS
HEAL THYSELF



KONEY
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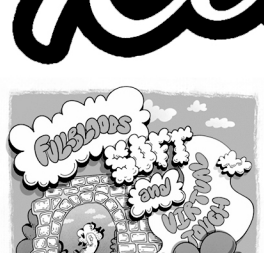
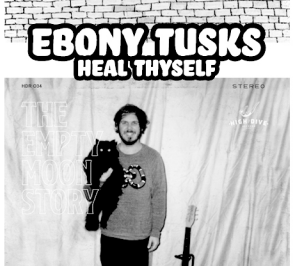


FULLBLOODS
SOFT AND VIRTUAL TOUCH

EBONY TUSKS
HDF

THIGHMASTER
BETWEEN THE KNEES AND SQUEEZE



THE EMPTY MOON
THE EMPTY MOON STORY

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SODA SELECTOR

Welcome to the first edition of Soda Selector. In the words of a former president, I've been "drinking that garbage" since my childhood. Since I don't have much of a taste for coffee or most alcoholic beverages, soda is still my go-to beverage for a caffeine fix or a not-so-hard-earned treat. Back in 2019, my roommate Kirby and I started our own soda review podcast, Sippin' On Some Soda, and since the show is on an indefinite hiatus, I figured I would continue my soda journey solo for now in this new column. Each month I'll be trying three sodas that are new to me and letting you know if they're worth a sip or not.

BY AARON RHODES

MTN DEW FROST BITE

According to the Mountain Dew Fandom wiki page (where I intend on spending more time in the coming months), Frost Bite is a "cool melon" flavor with a "cobalt blue" color. Originally available only at Walmart, I grabbed a bottle from Midtown Market as I took a miserable little mid-blizzard walk to retrieve some toiletries and snacks. On the label, there is a very pissed looking shark breaching out of the water. The drink has the distinct Mountain Dew base flavor (I'm kind of impressed by how consistent it is among all the variants they manufacture) with added melon flavor and a light, sort of tangy aftertaste. If I can recall them correctly (it's been a moment since I drank either), it's not too far off from White Out or Voltage, perhaps somewhere in between. It's also no less sugary or caffeinated than any other Dew, so its utilitarian element remains. Overall, it's not the best or worst Mountain Dew variant I've tried and should serve as a fun pick for Dew fans looking to mix up their rotation a bit.

COCK COLA

I grabbed this one on that same trip to Midtown Market. Why did I choose this one? I'll let you decide. Bottled in Nevada and distributed by Rocket Fizz, Cock Cola has a big old rooster on its label. The label also reads "made in the USA with pure cane sugar," two more wins as far as I'm concerned. Below the rooster is a claim that the beverage has a "strong cola taste" and I will not deny that. It has more of an acidic kick to it than most name brand colas and despite not being too dynamic, that kick makes it more fun to drink than many off-brand colas. I think I was a bit foolish to expect much from a novelty beverage such as this, but if novelty sodas are of interest to you, this one's definitely worth a try. No bull.

FENTIMANS VICTORIAN LEMONADE

"Ice, lemonade, my neck was drippin'."
-Don Toliver, 2020.

Fentimans is an English company established in 1905, best known for its ginger beer and Curiosity Cola. We tried Curiosity Cola for the first time on episode six of the soda podcast and were intrigued by its unique and relatively bitter taste. Also "botanically brewed," Fentimans Victorian Lemonade is another beverage with an interesting list of ingredients that us half-wit American lemonade drinkers may not expect: fermented ginger root extract, beet sugar, and herbal infusions (speedwell, juniper berry) among others. It's also 19% juice, putting mainstream beverage company lemonades to shame.

To add to the olde style sensibilities of this drink, you can observe a layer of pulpy material at the bottom of the bottle before you "upend before pouring" as the label directs. The drink has a pungent aroma, as any lemonade should, and you can certainly taste the lemon juice in the high end of it and the pear juice in the low end. Also, key to a bottled or canned lemonade, Fentimans Victorian Lemonade perfectly balances the amounts of carbonation and acidity present. It would've been too easy to make it too tart and blame the layman drinking it for lacking a sophisticated palette. It's not as distinct as Curiosity Cola is, but make no mistake, it is several steps above the mass-produced sugar water you're used to. Sampling this in the February arctic blast that crippled the American Midwest made me nostalgic for the 80 degree days on which my parents would ask me to mow the lawn.

Bonus points: there is a cute pooch on the label and the old British man on the Fentimans website History section is getting off a real fit. Shoutout to the fine people at KC Soda Co. for carrying this one.

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